RAJYA SABHA

Monday, the 29th March, 1993/ 8th Chaitra, 1915 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Position of India regarding productivity of coal

*421. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) what are the details of measures taken by Government to increase the productivity of coal during the last five years; and

(b) what is the manner in which these measures have helped in raising productivity ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) Some of the measures taken by the Government to increase the productivity of coal are improved manpower management, use of higher capacity equipment, introduction of new technologies, improved availability and utilisation of equipments and improved working conditions in underground mines.

(b) The above measures have resulted in increased productivity of machinery deployed as well as production per person employed, both in Opencast as well as Underground mines of Coal India Ltd. and Singareni Collieries Company Ltd.

श्री सुरेश पचौरी : माननीय सभापति जी, हमारे यहां लगभग 80 प्रतिशत देश के कोयले का उत्पादन कोल इंडिया लिमिटेड से होता है और बाकी सिंगरैनी कोलियरीज से होता है । इसकी 70 प्रतिशत जो खपत है वह पार-हाउसेज में, सीमेंट की इंडस्ट्रीज में, फर्टिलाइजर की इंडस्ट्रीज में होती है । यदि हम पिछले आंकड़े देखें तो हम पाते हैं कि जो अंडरग्राउंड माईनिंग का प्रोडक्शन है वह कम हुआ है। उसके आंकड़े मेरे पास हैं... **(व्यवधान)**

MR. CHAIRMAN : Will you pose your question ?

श्री सुरेश पचौरी : जिसके हिसाब से अंडरग्राउंड माइनिंग का प्रोडक्शन 1976-77 की अपेक्षा 1991-92 में कम हुआ है । तो मैं आपके माध्यम से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि अंडरग्राउंड माइनिंग में कम उत्पादन के क्या कारण हैं ? इस उत्पादन को बढ़ाने के लिए सरकार की तरफ से क्या प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं ? साथ ही जो ग्रेडेशन है कोयले का "ए" और "बी" ग्रेडेशन, उसका उत्पादन भी प्रतिवर्ष कम होता जा रहा है । उस ग्रेडेशन में सुधार करने की दृष्टि से भी क्या कदम सरकार की तरफ से उठाए जा रहे हैं, "ए" और "बी" ग्रेड के कोयले के प्रोडक्शन के लिए ।

SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA : Sir, generally the steps taken for improving coal production, both underground as well as opencast, are as follows :

> Improved manpower planning including deployment of surplus workers; stricter control on increase in manpower; deployment of higher capacity equipment like dragline and shovels; introduction of new technology; improvement in the availability and utilisation of equipment by providing adequate workshop support; and improvement in working conditions, providing better ventilation and better lighting, better and improved communication system in the underground mines.

So far as production of better grade quality of coal, that is, A-grade and B-grade mentioned by the hon. Member, is concerned, these are found in certain mines particularly in the Raniganj coalfield area. We are trying to improve the productivity from there and also introducing new types of technology CIL are also installing weigh-bridges which are computerised and also coal-handling plants to improve quality of despatches. These have given us good results in the last two years. These are the technological improvements that are taking place.

श्री सुरेश पचौरी : सर, जो माईनिंग इंडस्ट्री है, वह बहुत ज्यादा लेबर इंटेंसिव होती है । मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि वे कौन-कौन से फैक्टर्स हैं जो लेबर प्रोडक्टिविटी को प्रभावित करते हैं और किस स्टेट में अभी तक इस बात को ध्यान में रखते हुए कदम उठाए गए हैं ? राज्य-वार उनका ओ. एम.एस. के हिसाब से क्या ब्यौरा है यानी आर्गनाइजेशन ऑफ डिग्निटी के हिसाब से उसमें मध्य प्रदेश की क्या स्थिति है ?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA : Sir, the factors influencing labour productivity are : geomining conditions, mining technology, socio-economic characteristics, geographical factors and work patterns.

So far as the output per man-shift in respect of the States is concerned, we find that in Ananta, in Orissa, which is an open-cast mine, it is the highest—21.28 tonnes per man-shift of 8 shours. Then, Madhya Pradesh comes second. The open-cast mines in Madhya Pradesh are : Gevra, Luxman, Dipka, Jayant and Bina. So far as the underground mines in Madhya Pradesh are concerned, OMS is the highest in the country. The workers there should be congratulated on this. It is 1.35, 1.17, etc., according to the situation of the mines. The underground mines are : Balgi, Pali, Kumda, Dumanhill, Pathakhera-I , Beharband, Charcha, Satpura-II, Bhatgaon, Govinda and Mara. It is the highest in these underground mines, so far as OMS is concerned. Therefore, the workers should be congratulated on this.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister has talked about the productivity during the last five years. The main problem in the case of the coal industry is that there is no technology to control the fire in the mines. As a result, half of the coal is wasted just in burning in the initial stage. May I, therefore, know from the hon. Minister whether he would consider importing technology and knowhow from foreign countries so that these fires in the mines can be put out and production of coal can be increased ?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA : Sir, fires in the mines are causing concern since 1916. It is true that fire is there in a large number of areas and it should be controlled. Unfortunately, they are in the areas where the best quality of coal is available. Therefore, we consulted the World Bank in respect thereof because of the huge cost involved. Now, Rs. 35 crores have been sanctioned by the World Bank for making a diagnostic study, i.e. to make a study as to how the fire could be controlled because it is a raging fire and it cannot be controlled just like that. But in the meantime, until the study is made, we are undertaking the trench pattern for separating the fire affected areas so that protection could be given to the adjoining areas.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister has explaind about the technical aspects of increasing the production of coal and increasing the productivity. But I would like to put a different question to the hon. Minister in relation to productivity. I hope the hon. Minister who has recently taken charge of the Department of Coal is aware of the fact that Coal India is a den of corruption. Even in the matter of increased production and productivity, a chain of corruption is working there. First, I would like to explain it and then let the Minister reply to it. Though, technically, they are taking steps to increase the production of coal, is the hon. Minister sure that the figures that he gets from the General Managers of the different subsidiaries of Coal India actually tally with the production that is effected in the different coal mines ?

Sir, the facts are there, that in order to satisfy the Government that productivity of coal has increased and production of coal has increased, they show a fake figure to the Ministry, which does not tally with the real production. Thus, a chain of corruption works in every coal mine. That's why I would like to know from the Minister whether he has any foolproof method of actually verifying that the figure he gets from a particular coal mine tallies with the real production of that mine or whether there is any deception or fraud. How do you make sure that the figure that is dished out to the Ministry is really the figure of coal production or is it an exception to the Ministry and a process of money-making ? How does the Government make sure of it ? That is what I would like to know from the Minister.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA : Sir, although this does not arise out of this question, still I will try to answer the question as far as I know. The hon. Member has asked whether there is any method to know for certain that the figures given by Coal India are the correct figures, in view of the alleged corruption and alleged mismanagement in Coal India Ltd. Sir, this is a company under Companies Act and a company shall have to file accounts which are subject

to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India. This being a Government company, we have an internal Vigilance Department and we have an overall Vigilance Department also. And auditing agencies like the Committee of Parliament on Public Undertakings and other bodies are there. So, within the gadgets as available at present according to law, on that basis the accounts are looked into. This is one side. Another side is the objective side. Last year, Coal India had given profit and this year also it is going to give profit. Now, this means, after nationalization having taken place, consecutively for two years profits are being made. Consecutively for two years if profits are made, as the hon. Member knows, it is called "turn-around of the company." This is one of the public sector companies which has been functioning well, at last year and this year. Therefore, on that basis I have answered that—according to the reports given by Coal India and also seeing that it is, in fact, giving profit. Therefore, I rely on the figures given by Coal India.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : सरकार की लिबरलाइजेशन पालिसी है तो क्या सरकार कोल खदान क्षेत्र में भी लिबरलाइजेशन पालिसी लाग करके निजी क्षेत्र जो है उसमें कोई प्रवेश देने का विचार कर रही है या नहीं? इसी से जुड़ा सवाल है कि जो आपने कैप्टिव कैप्टिव कोल सप्लाई की पालिसी अपनाई वह पूरी उतरी है या नहीं ?

Have you followed my Hindi question ?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA : Yes. The translation came slightly late, but I have followed it. Sir, about the first question, so far as the private sector is concerned, this House has already given its blessings to the amendment portion which is now pending before the Lok Sabha. That is, if somebody puts up a power production unit, then they would be given an earmarked captive coal so that they can on their own mine coal from there and there may not be trouble between the power production unit and the coal mine, the first saying that they are not functioning because Coal India is failing and Coal India saying, 'No, no, we are giving good coal but you are failing." Therefore, this is one step. If the Bill is duly passed by the Lok Sabha then this will come into operation, including the washeries portion. Otherwise there is no question of allowing any private coal mining as presently advised.

Secondly, the cash-and-carry scheme is making some improvement upon the previous years, and 15 per cent more recovery has taken place so far as the arrears and also the current bills of various power sectors and customers are concerned.

श्री गुफरान आजम : सभापति महोदय, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं और मैं समझता हूं कि उनको जानकारी भी होगी कि इस देश में ग्लास इंडस्ट्री के लिए जो कोयले की रिक्वायरमेंट है वे सिर्फ ग्लास इंडस्ट्री के लिए रानीगंज का कोयला चाहते हैं और रानीगंज का कोयला उनको उतना सप्लाई नहीं किया जाता है जितना उनकी मांग है । इसलिए क्या मंत्री महोदय कोई ऐसी माइन जिसमें रानीगंज जैसा कोयला हो, उसके लिए काल तैयारी कर रहे हैं और जितनी रिक्वायरमेंट ग्लास इंडस्ट्री को है उसकी पूर्ति कर रहे हैं और अगर नहीं, तो कितने कोयले की उनकी रिक्वायरमेंट है और कितना उनको दिया जा रहा है ?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA : Sir, so far as the glass industry is concerned, it came to my notice from a newspaper report that the glass industry was finding some difficulty. I have immediately asked for information about the actions being taken to meet the demand as reported in the newspaper, the type of coal required for it and what other things are to be supplied. As soon as I get a report, I will write to the hon. Member.

So far as the production of good quality coal is concerned, I have already answered that there are certain mines which produce good coal. They are mostly underground. I am trying to see if we can change our policy of not going in for so much of open-cast mining although we must keep a balance between open-cast mining as well as mining underground where good quality coal is available.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Question No. 422.

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU : Sir, I come from Bihar, and coalmines are mostly in Bihar.

SHRI CHHOTUBHAI PATEL : Sir, Gujarat is not getting sufficient good quality coal. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have to cover more questions, please.

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU : I am a Member from Bihar. Coalmines are mostly in Bihar.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please. I have taken so much time. I want to cover some questions. We cannot limit ourselves to only one or two questions in one Question Hour.

... (*Interruptions*)

Average production of Tobacco per Acre

*442 DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the average production of F.C.V. tobacco per acre;

(b) what is its average realisation; and

(c) what is the per acre amount of excise revenue Government earns therefrom either directly or indirectly ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) As per estimates made by the Tobacco Board the average production of FCV tobacco during 1991-92 was about 419 kg. per acre (farm weight) and the average price realisation was Rs. 30.03 per kg.

(c) Excise duty is levied on cigarettes, not on raw tobacco. The rate of duty is related to the length of the cigarette and the fact whether it is a filter or non-filter cigarette. Further, the excise duty is on the total cost of the finished product which includes cost of dry weight tobacco, filter tipping paper, flavours etc. and there is no way of precisely assessing the amount of excise revenue earned by Government for FCV tobacco produced per acre.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI : Sir, I seek your protection. I believe in the efficiency and intelligence of the Minister, but I do not know why the hon. Minister is purposely suppressing the information.

Part (c) of my question is :

> "What is the per acre amount of excise revenue Government earns therefrom either directly or indirectly ?"

The hon. Minister says :

> "Excise duty is levied on cigarettes, not on raw tobacco. The rate of duty is related to the length of the cigarette and the fact whether it is a filter or non-filter cigarette. Further, the excise duty is on the total cost of the finished product which includes cost of dry weight tobacco, filter tipping paper, flavours etc. and there is no way of precisely assessing the amount of excise revenue earned by Government for FCV tobacco produced per acre."

If the Minister completes the answer to part (c) of my question, I will put my supplementary.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is your supplementary ? You put your supplementary. Do not have three supplementaries. You ask your supplementary right now.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI : Sir, the hon. Minister says that the per-acre yield of FCV tobacco is 419 kg. It is a fact that FCV, flue-cured virginia, tobacco is grown both in Andhra Pradesh and in Karnataka. In about 3.5 lakh acres tobacco is grown, and they produce 150 million kg. Half of it is intended for export, and the remaining half is meant for domestic consumption. It is a fact that each kilogramme of tobacco yields 1,250 cigarettes. Therefore, Sir, the cost of each piece of cigarette ranges from 12 paise to 85 paise. So the total tax revenue collected by the Excise Department on cigarettes is to the tune of Rs. 2500 crores.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You know the answer already. Have you got to ask a question ? Please ask the question.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI : I am asking, Sir. Please bear with me. Since the Minister says that there is no way out to assess the excise return, I am giving my formula.